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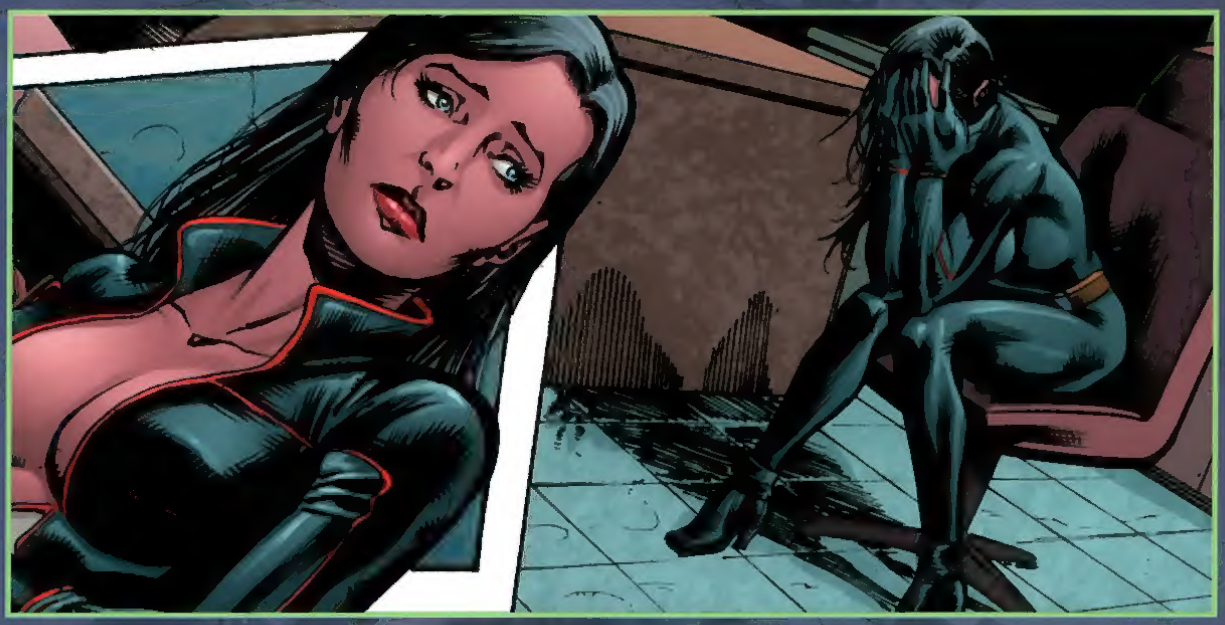
When superhumanity needs a detective agency, they call upon Madrox the Multiple Man and his mutant team of investigators...

X-FACTOR



Monet St. Croix has learned that her father is being held prisoner in an unnamed part of South America. What do they want in exchange for his freedom? Monet herself. So she's decided to provide them exactly that... and Guido, a.k.a. Strong Guy, is along for the ride...

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X-FACTOR (ISSN #1932-5266) **No. 203, May, 2010.** Published Monthly by MARVEL WORLDWIDE, INC., a subsidiary of MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT, LLC. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 417 5th Avenue, New York, NY 10016. **APPLICATION TO MAIL PERIODICAL POSTAGE RATES IS PENDING AT NEW YORK, NY AND AT ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES.**

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$2.99 per copy in the U.S. (GST #R127032852) in the direct market and $3.99 per copy in the U.S. and $3.99 in Canada (GST #R127032852) through the newsstand. Canadian Agreement #40668537. **Printed in the USA.** Subscription rate (U.S. dollars) for 12 issues: U.S. $27.00; Canada $37.00; Foreign $39.00. **POSTMASTER: SEND ALL ADDRESS CHANGES TO X-FACTOR, C/O MARVEL SUBSCRIPTION DEPT. P.O. BOX 5187 BRENTWOOD, TN 37024. TELEPHONE # (800) 217-9158. FAX # (615) 377-0525. subscriptions@marvel.com.** ALAN FINE, EVP - Office Of The President, Marvel Worldwide, Inc. and EVP & CMO Marvel Characters B.V.; DAN BUCKLEY, Chief Executive Officer and Publisher - Print, Animation & Digital Media; JIM SOKOLOWSKI, Chief Operating Officer; DAVID GABRIEL, SVP of Publishing Sales & Circulation; DAVID BOGART, SVP of Business Affairs & Talent Management; MICHAEL PASCIULLO, VP of Merchandising & Communications; JIM O'KEEFE, VP of Operations & Logistics; DAN CARR, Executive Director of Publishing Technology; JUSTIN F. GABRIE, Director of Publishing & Editorial Operations; SUSAN CRESPI, Editorial Operations Manager; ALEX MORALES, Publishing Operations Manager; STAN LEE, Chairman Emeritus. For information regarding advertising in Marvel Comics or on Marvel.com, please contact Ron Stern, VP of Business Development, at rstern@marvel.com. For Marvel subscription inquiries, please call 800-217-9158.

FATHER!
FATHER, IT'S MONET! I'M HERE!
DON'T WORRY, FATHER! I'LL GET YOU OUT OF HERE! I'LL--
WHA--?!

I DON'T... I--
OH, OKAY. SOMEONE'S PLAYING *GAMES*, IS THAT IT?
WHOEVER'S WATCHING THIS: YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT WHEN IT COMES TO PLAYING GAMES, I ALWAYS WIN.
ALWAYS.
WHAT THE HELL?
I'M *INVULNERABLE*. HOW AM I *BLEEDING*?
IT'S...
WAIT, THAT'S... THAT'S NOT BLOOD.
THERE'S SOMETHING...
NO...

OH GOD...
NO!!!
NOOOOO!!!

NO. WE KNOW NOTHING HERE.
THIS IS THE GIRL I'M LOOKIN' FOR. AND I'M TOLD THAT YER BOSS, SHE'S THE ONE TO ASK. THE ONE THEY CALL, "SEÑORA PIERNAS."
AIN'T NOTHIN' GOES ON IN THIS GODFORSAKEN DUMP THAT SHE DON'T KNOW ABOUT. LEAST THAT'S WHAT THE VILLAGERS TOLD ME.
THEN YOU WERE TOLD WRONG.
NOW BE ON YOUR WAY.
LOOK, I DIDN'T ASK T'BE HERE. THIS IS SUPPOSED T'BE A RESCUE MISSION AND IT'S GOTTEN TOTALLY FUBARED.
NOW I THINK THE BAD GUYS GOT MY FRIEND, AND--
GOOD LUCK FINDING HER.
YEAH.
OKAY.
THIS IS GOOD, ACTUALLY.
'CAUSE ASKIN' GUYS FOR INFO, THAT AIN'T THE WAY WE USUALLY DO IT IN MY NEIGHBORHOOD.
-SIGH- AMERICANS.

WE PREFER T' BEAT IT OUTTA 'EM.
BAK-BOOM
AAAAAHHH!!!
NAH, DON'T GET UP. I'LL LET MYSELF IN.
(THERE HE IS!)
(GET HIM! GET HIM!)
BUDDABUDDABUDDABUDDABUDDA
BUDAABUDDABUDDABUDDABUDDABUDDABUDAABUDDA
WAM

ARHHHHHHH!
EEYIIIIIIII!
WUDUNK
I KNOW WE AMERICANS, WE DON'T GOT THE BEST REP 'ROUND THE WORLD RIGHT NOW.
BUT IN OUR DEFENSE...
...IF PEOPLE DIDN'T KEEP SHOOTIN' AT US, WE WOULDN'T HAVE T'KEEP OPENIN' UP A CAN OF WHUP-ASS ON YA.
IT IS YOU AMERICANS WHO KEEP TRESPASSING WHERE YOU'RE NOT WELCOME!
YEAH, WELL, PUH-TAY-TOE, PUH-TAH-TOE.

HELLO! ANYBODY HOME?

UH-KAY, THAT'S A YES.
LOOK, GUYS, JUST FER THE RECORD, I AM BULLETPROOF. GETTIN' SHOT DON'T THRILL ME 'CAUSE IT KINDA STINGS, BUT I CAN TAKE IT.

THE RICOCHETS ARE GONNA DO SOME DAMAGE, THOUGH. COULD HIT YOU, COULD HIT THE FURNITURE, AND THERE'S SOME NICE STUFF HERE.
I MEAN, THUGS ARE A DIME A DOZEN, BUT I'D HATE T'SEE THAT HEPPLEWHITE OVER THERE RUINED, Y'KNOW?

LOOK...I'M TRYING TO FIND THIS GIRL. WE WERE IN A PRIVATE PLANE THAT WAS SHOT DOWN BY...I DUNNO WHAT IT WAS.
WHEN I CAME TO, I WAS LYIN' IN THE JUNGLE, AND GOD KNOWS WHERE SHE IS. I THINK TERRORISTS HAVE 'ER.
I JUST WANNA TALK T'THE WOMAN THE VILLAGERS CALL SEÑORA PIERNAS.

THAT'S NOT MY NAME. "PIERNAS" MEANS "LEGS."
BUT THE VILLAGERS... THEY DO SO ENJOY THEIR LITTLE JESTS.

MY EYES ARE UP HERE.
IN CASE YOU'RE WONDERING, THE BLAST FROM AN AMERICAN LAND MINE KILLED MY HUSBAND AND LEFT ME AS YOU SEE.
SO THE WAR ON DRUGS KILLED ONE DEALER AND CREATED ANOTHER. THANK GOD FOR AMERICAN INGENUITY, WOULDN'T YOU SAY, SEÑOR...?
CAROSELLA. BUT, UH...FOLKS CALL ME "GUIDO."
ITALIAN-AMERICAN?
NEW YORKER. WE'RE KINDA LIKE OUR OWN COUNTRY. SORRY ABOUT 'CHER LEGS.
WELL, I ASSUME YOU DIDN'T SET THE LAND MINE, SO I BELIEVE IN NEW YORK THEY'D SAY, "FUGGEDABOUTIT."
IN SOME PARTS, YEAH.
YOU KNEW THAT CABINET WAS HEPPLEWHITE, INSTANTLY.
NAH. I JUST LIKE SAYIN' "HEPPLEWHITE." NERVOUS HABIT.
YOU JOKE TO COVER YOUR INTELLECT. INTERESTING.
YOU WERE WAVING A PICTURE AROUND EARLIER. SHOW IT TO ME...
AND I WILL SHOW YOU MINE.

THAT IS YOUR PLANE, I TAKE IT?
HOW'D'JA GET THIS?
I HAVE CAMERAS EVERYWHERE WATCHING THE SKIES. ONE NEVER KNOWS WHEN UNINVITED GUESTS MIGHT BE DROPPING BY.
WHAT THE HELL IS THIS STUFF BLASTIN' US?
I WAS HOPING YOU WOULD KNOW.
TRIANGULATING ITS POINT OF ORIGIN, I'D SAY IT WAS FROM THE INTERLOPERS.
THE WHO?
THERE IS AN ANCIENT TEMPLE A DISTANCE FROM HERE, ABANDONED FOR CENTURIES. SAID TO BE "ACCURSED," IF YOU BELIEVE SUCH THINGS.
SOME INDIVIDUALS TOOK UP RESIDENCE THERE NOT LONG AGO. YOU WOULD PROBABLY CHARACTERIZE THEM AS "TERRORISTS."
ARE THEY WHO YOU SEEK?
I'M BETTIN' YEAH. MONET'S DAD WAS KIDNAPPED. I GOT CONTACTS WITH THE FEDS THAT POINTED US IN THIS DIRECTION. ONE CHARTERED PLANE LATER, HERE WE ARE.
MONET IS THE GIRL IN THE PICTURE, YES?
YEAH.
SO IT'S NOT AS IF YOU'RE CONDUCTING A MISSING PERSONS SEARCH. YOU CAME WITH HER. YOU SIMPLY GOT SEPARATED.
SO?
SO HOW DO YOU HAPPEN TO HAVE HER PICTURE WITH YOU?
I, UH...
DO YOU ALWAYS CARRY IT?
UHM...

MARCO! PAULO!
DID... YOU SAY...?
Y'KNOW WHAT? NEVERMIND.
THESE INDIVIDUALS IN THE TEMPLE, THESE... INTERLOPERS...
...THEIR PRESENCE IS DISTURBING TO ME. BUT THEY WERE NOT INFRINGING ON MY BUSINESS AND SO I TURNED A BLIND EYE TO THEM.
IF YOU, ON THE OTHER HAND, SHOULD DESTROY THEM, I SHALL SHED NO TEARS.
I DO NOT BLAME YOU. SHE IS QUITE ATTRACTIVE.
HERE.
AND IF THEY DESTROY ME?
I WILL SHED A TEAR. PERHAPS EVEN TWO, IF I AM FEELING GENEROUS.
MARCO AND PAULO WILL LEAD YOU TO THE TEMPLE. WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THAT IS UP TO YOU.
THANK YOU.
AND GUIDO...
IF YOU HAVE FEELINGS FOR THE YOUNG WOMAN, KEEPING THEM TO YOURSELF IS FOOLISH. SEIZE OPPORTUNITIES WHILE YOU CAN.
A GAL LIKE HER WOULD NEVER THINK OF A GUY LIKE ME THAT WAY. BUT I 'PRECIATE THE THOUGHT.
DON'T UNDERESTIMATE YOURSELF.
SOMETIMES THE OBVIOUS ANSWER MIGHT BE STARING YOU IN THE FACE.

OH GOD! I'M PENANCE AGAIN! GOD, PLEASE, NO--!
GET AWAY FROM HER! GET AWAY FROM MY DAUGHTER, OR--!
OR WHAT, AMBASSADOR? WHAT FORCES WILL YOU BRING DOWN UPON US?
WHAT EMPTY THREATS WILL YOU HURL?
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU CAN SAY THAT WILL BE OF THE SLIGHTEST CONSEQUENCE?

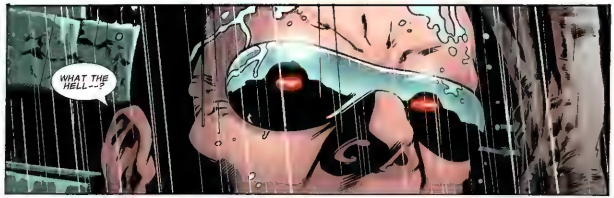
MONET, LISTEN TO ME! YOU'RE NOT PENANCE! THAT...THAT THING THAT YOUR BROTHER TRANSFORMED YOU INTO SO THAT...
...SO THAT HE COULD LIVE OFF YOU...
...THAT'S GONE! THAT'S IN THE PAST! THAT'S--
COME NOW, AMBASSADOR. YOU KNOW BETTER THAN THAT.
NOTHING IS EVER TRULY IN THE PAST. WE CARRY WHAT WE WERE WITH US, ALWAYS.
WERE THAT NOT THE CASE, PSYCHOANALYSTS WOULD ALL BE OUT OF JOBS.
IT DOESN'T MATTER THAT YOUR DAUGHTER ISN'T ACTUALLY PENANCE.
SHE SIMPLY NEEDS TO BELIEVE THAT SHE IS.
BECAUSE SHE IS CONDITIONED AS PENANCE TO BE AN ENERGY SOURCE FOR OTHERS.
AND I REQUIRE THAT ENERGY, YOU SEE...

BUDDABUDDA
...BECAUSE MY LIFE DEPENDS ON--
WHA--?!
ARRRHH!!!
I'M SORRY, SIR! I--HE MADE ME--!
IDIOT!
EEEYIIIIIIM...
KRUNCH

IF THE BULLET HAD HIT THE OXYGEN TANK--! NEXT TIME KEEP THE SAFETY ON THE DAMNED THING!
SIR, UH... WITH, UH...ALL RESPECT...
I DON'T THINK "NEXT TIME" IS GOING TO BE MUCH OF AN ISSUE.
AS IF I WERE NOT WEAK ENOUGH ALREADY.
IF ONLY I DIDN'T HAVE TO DRAIN MISS ST. CROIX SO SLOWLY. BUT TOO MUCH, TOO FAST COULD KILL HER BEFORE I HAVE EVERYTHING I NEED.
AND DON'T THINK FOR A MOMENT I'M GOING TO LET YOU OFF, AMBASSADOR!
AS SOON AS I'M SURE YOU HAVE NO FURTHER USEFULNESS TO--
SIR!
THE GIRL'S COMPANION! HE'S HEADING THIS WAY!
ALMOST AT THE FRONT ENTRANCE!
I'M FAIRLY SURE OUR WEAPONS WON'T BE OF ANY USE AGAINST HIM!
DON'T WORRY.
MINE WILL BE.

THIS THE PLACE, HUH?
YES. AND AS FAR AS WE GO.
THAT'S FINE. I CAN HANDLE IT FROM--
UNNHHHHH!!!!
OOOOFF!!!!

GUYS! MAYBE ON SECOND THOUGHT, I COULD USE A--
YEAH, OKAY. JUST...HEAD OUT. HURRY AND SELL DRUGS TO SECOND GRADERS BEFORE THEY GET TOO COLD.
I'LL JUST HANDLE THIS ON MY--

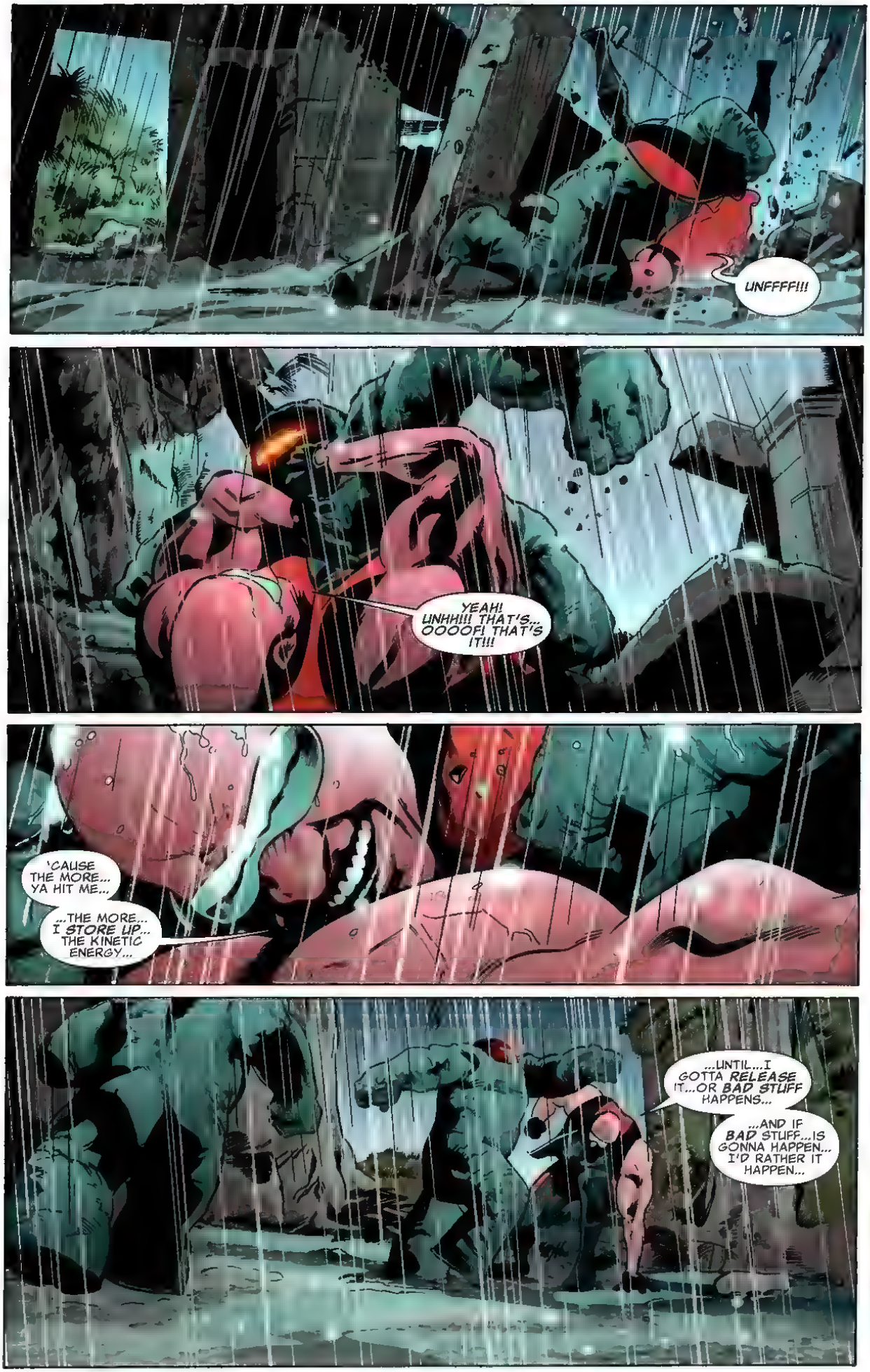

WHAT THE HELL--?

WHO ARE YOU GUYS SUPPOSED TO BE?

NOT 'ZACTLY CHATTY ARE YA?

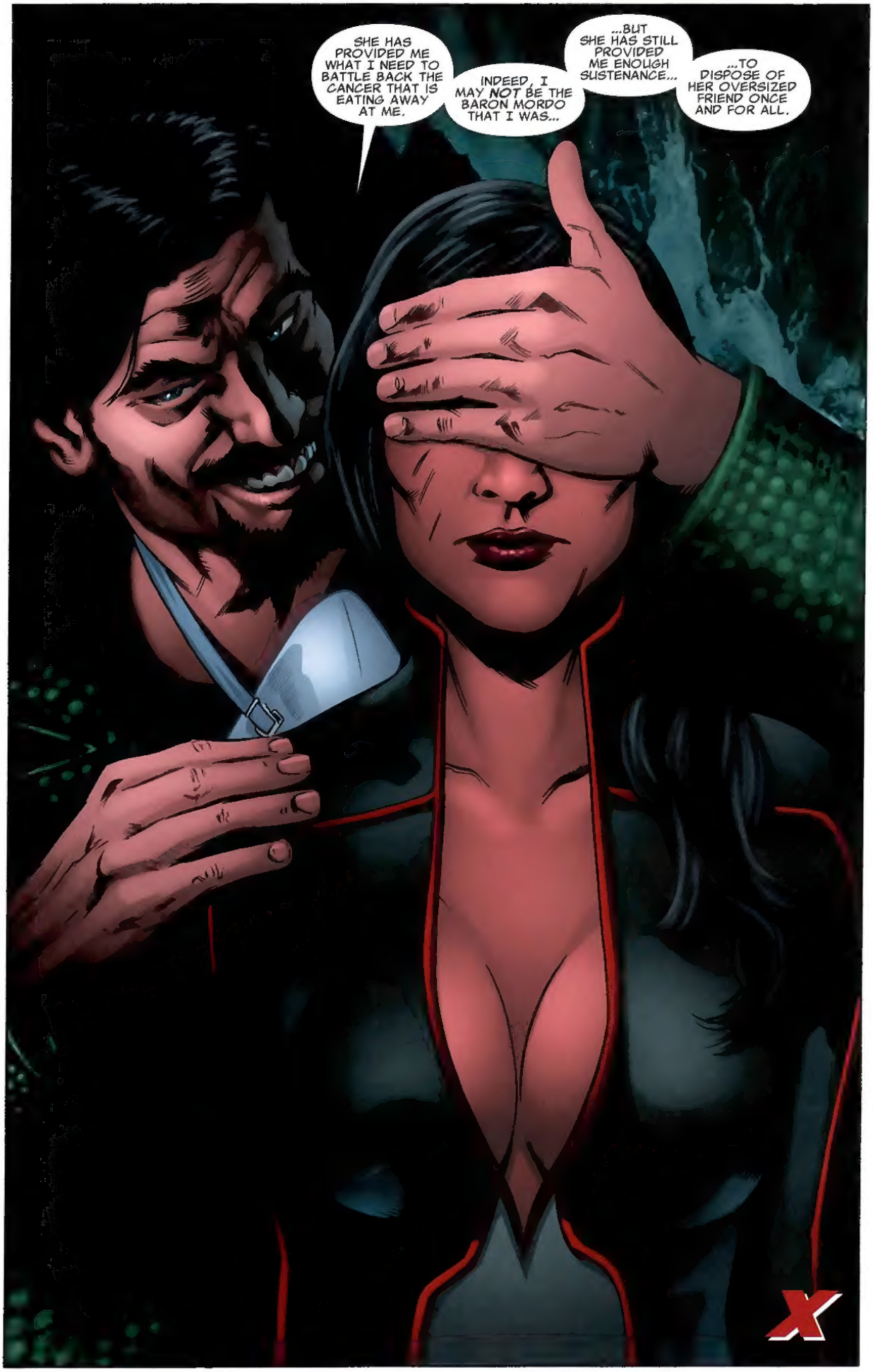
FIGURES, SINCE YA HAVE THE WHOLE "NO MOUTH" LOOK GOING FOR YA.

UH-OH.


UNFFFF!!!
YEAH! UNHH!!! THAT'S... OOOOF! THAT'S IT!!!
'CAUSE THE MORE... YA HIT ME...
...THE MORE... I STORE UP... THE KINETIC ENERGY...
...UNTIL... I GOTTA RELEASE IT... OR BAD STUFF HAPPENS...
...AND IF BAD STUFF... IS GONNA HAPPEN... I'D RATHER IT HAPPEN...

...T'YOU!

HOW IN THE WORLD DID HE MANAGE THAT?
FATHER--?
FATHER! WHAT...WHAT ARE YOU--? WHERE--?
FATH--?
THAT IS QUITE ENOUGH OF THAT.
AHHH... YESSSSS. YES, THAT IS...
YOU ARE QUITE THE SWEET THING, MISS ST. CROIX, I HAVE TO SAY.
AMBASSADOR, YOUR DAUGHTER IS MOST DELICIOUS.
I WILL SAVOR THE TASTE OF HER FOR QUITE SOME TIME. FOR THE MOMENT...


SHE HAS PROVIDED ME WHAT I NEED TO BATTLE BACK THE CANCER THAT IS EATING AWAY AT ME.
INDEED, I MAY NOT BE THE BARON MORDO THAT I WAS...
...BUT SHE HAS STILL PROVIDED ME ENOUGH SUSTENANCE...
...TO DISPOSE OF HER OVERSIZED FRIEND ONCE AND FOR ALL.

NEXT

SECOND COMING!

Mcbain

Edits Scans